

WORK ETHIC



So What Is Work Ethic?

It's easy to think that having a good work ethic is just about working hard.

There are lots of people that work hard and working hard is certainly part of it but it is much more than that includes reliability, dependability and impact on others. If it is your job to open up the store then obviously you need to be there on time to do so. I often see the guy who opens up the local coffee shop running down the road moments before he is due to open.

Whilst his determination to run to be on time is recognised, work ethic is also about reliability and dependability; it encompasses dedication and a sense of responsibility. That same coffee shop doesn't need to just be open, but ready to go at the time of opening. Opening time is not the time to be putting on your apron and switching on the oven and the lights. In the same way the first meeting or phone call of the day is not the time to be eating your breakfast!

A good work ethic is therefore also about professionalism, quality of service and work output. It is easy to say, yet far more difficult to ensure, that the first customer of the day receives the same high level of service and experience as the last.

Team working is also part of your work ethic, enabling and allowing others to do their job to the best of their ability because you have done yours on time and to standard. It is certainly not about you doing your job regardless and potentially to the detriment or delay of others doing theirs. Nobody wants to be correcting the spelling in your report or having to workaround something that got missed and cannot be recovered. This can be particularly important in the increasingly remote and flexible environment we now operate in.

For many years I was involved with a commercial cleaning company that used to clean newbuild houses. Whilst as much as possible work was scheduled so the same team would complete the cleaning process from start to finish, over a process which took a number of visits across a number of weeks this was not always possible. People without the correct work ethic were quickly highlighted against those who used to be proficient and conscientious. Certain team members would leave things unfinished or below standard if they knew they would not be the ones required to finish the job and deliver the end product of a sparkling new home. These people were clearly not good team workers but also lacked a sense of responsibility and respect to other members of staff which are other key aspects of your work ethic.



So work ethic is all about hard work but it is also being aware of the broad impact your work has on those around you.



Action:

Identify the people or teams that are impacted by your activity or lack of it and identify if your work is impacting or enhancing their ability to do theirs. Where possible do all you can to improve the impact you are having on overall output as a result of your activity.

